An Humble

ADDRESS

TO THE

KNIGHTS, CITIZENS

AND

BURGESSES,

Elected to repreſent the

COMMONS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN

In the enſuing PARLIAMENT.

By a FREEHOLDER.

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AN HUMBLE ADDRESS TO THE KNIGHTS, CITIZENS AND BURGESSES, &c.

GENTLEMEN,

YOU are now inveſted with the whole repreſentative Power of the Commons of *Great Britain*; a Truſt, the moſt honourable and important that can be conferr'd upon Subjects and Freemen. Not only our Lives, our Liberties and our Eſtates, are at your Diſpoſal, but even the Preſervation of our excellent *Conſtitution*, and the very Being of the *Britiſh* Name, depend upon your honeſt and prudent Conduct at this critical Conjuncture.

I muſt

I muſt therefore beg Leave, with great Humility, to offer you ſome Conſiderations on the Part which a *Britiſh Houſe of Commons* ought to take at ſuch a Criſis; for though you are certainly inveſted with a plenary Authority, and cannot be controul'd in your Conduct, by any Perſons without Doors, after your Election, yet every good Man will be glad to know the Sentiments of thoſe whom he repreſents, and to give their Arguments a fair Hearing, at leaſt, whether they may have Force enough to convince his Judgment, or not. This is all the Privilege we claim by applying to our *Repreſentatives*; and as it hath been frequently exerciſed, upon extraordinary Occaſions, without giving any Offence, I muſt rely on the ſame Indulgence on the preſent Emergency, which is as great and important as ever awaken'd the Attention of this Nation.

In the firſt Place, you will do well to conſider, that you are a *new Repreſentative of the People*, and every Gentleman ought to look upon himſelf as ſuch, whether he hath ever ſat in former Parliaments, or not. All paſt Errors and Miſcarriages are now cancell'd, as far as your *Parliamentary Capacity* extends, (for that is very different from the *miniſterial Office*) and you now ſet out again with freſh Powers, as new Men. Nothing therefore, which was done in the *laſt Parliament*, ought to preclude your Freedom of Judgment in the *enſuing*; nor determine you, right or wrong, to perſevere in the ſame Courſe. Some Gentlemen, perhaps, may have been formerly govern'd too much by *Party Conſiderations*, and others by *perſonal Attachments* or *Prejudices*; but Time and the Event of Things muſt have now convinced them that they follow'd falſe Guides, and will induce them, no Doubt, to caſt them off for the future. — If any others ſhould have ſuffer'd themſelves to be influenc'd

enc'd by *worſe Motives*, they have now an Opportunity of purging their Characters, and making ſome Atonement to their Country, by a more juſt and honourable Conduct.

Theſe Conſiderations relate only to *thoſe Gentlemen* who have already enjoy'd Seats in Parliament. But there are amongſt you great Numbers of *new Members*, ſtrictly ſo called, to whom this *Addreſs* is more particularly, and indeed more chearfully directed; for as theſe conſiſt chiefly of *young Gentlemen*, who have hitherto had no Share in the Guilt or Folly of any former Meaſures, we may apply to them with more Freedom and Hopes of Succeſs.

To you, *Gentlemen*, in this fatal Criſis, to you does the Nation commit her Intereſts, and from you does ſhe hope her Preſervation. You are come up, as it were, to a Trial of your Characters; and they will for ever retain the Impreſſions which you now ſtamp upon them. If you keep them pure and unſullied, their Currency will be univerſal; but if you mix them up with the baſe Allay of a *Miniſter*, you tarniſh their Luſtre, and leſſen their Weight: They will generally be return'd upon your Hands, or paſs only within the *Verge of Corruption*.

You are at preſent unengaged, uncorrupted, and, we hope, uninfluenced. Two Paths ly before you. Which to follow, is a very ſerious and important Conſideration. If, at firſt ſetting out, you chuſe the wrong, you will ſoon be bewilder'd, and it may never be in your Power to quit it more. The Paths of *Corruption* inſenſibly lead to the Precipice of *Infamy*, from whence there is no Return. But we depend on your making a right Choice. There is an Honeſty natural to *Youth*; there is a Spirit unbroken by Complaiſance; there is a Senſe of Shame, and a generous Regard to Reputation. All theſe are ſo ma-

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ny Warrants of your behaving in a Manner that becomes you; and, till you loſe theſe, your Country will not loſe you. But, be aſſured, no Artifice will be wanting to diveſt you of them; and ſuch Methods have formerly been too ſucceſsful, not to give us ſome Apprehenſions of their prevailing to your Diſhonour, unleſs you are premoniſhed and forearmed againſt them.

If *Luxury*, if *Pleaſure* can make you ſacrifice your Morals to your Appetites; if the childiſh Pomp of *Strings* and *empty Names* can flatter your Imaginations; they will all be employ'd to draw you off from the honeſt Bent of your natural Diſpoſition. But, if the Candour of your yet untainted Minds, ſhould reject theſe Allurements with Diſdain, then a more artful Attempt will be made upon you; then you will be told, that this Horror of *Corruption*, this *Spartan* and *Roman* Virtue, is the Effect of your Ignorance of the World, and a Speculation only fit for School-Boys. The Force of *Ridicule* will be likewiſe try'd, and you'll be facetiouſly call'd *hopeful young Saints*, and *Patriots*. Men of reputed Abilities will be ſet on to warn you of the Uſeleſsneſs and Folly of theſe high-flown Notions. You will be told, they are romantick, impracticable, the Bane of all Buſineſs, and the Contempt of every Man of Senſe. Little falſe Confidences will be made you of the private Views of *Gentlemen in Oppoſition*; Bits of Scandal thrown out upon their Characters; and an Opinion inculcated, that the Diſpute on *either Side* is only for *Power*, not *Principles*. Thus, by Degrees, they will hope to bring you to an Indifference for *both Sides*, and a Regard for nothing but *yourſelf*; a neceſſary Conſequence of which is a devoting of all your Actions to *preſent Profit*, and joining with *thoſe* who offer moſt.

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Should this fail, ſhould you be firm enough to maintain, againſt the Faſhion of the Times, againſt the Example of many of your Acquaintance, and againſt the Weight of ſuperior Authority, that there is ſomething real in *publick Spirit*, *Integrity* and *Freedom*, you will be laugh'd at for *honeſt*, *ſimple Fellows*, and a quite different Language will be uſed to you. You will then hear of nothing but the Cauſe of *Whiggiſm*; the Danger we are in from the *Tories*; the Neceſſity of uniting under the Standard of the *preſent M———r*. You will be told, that *Liberty* and *Property*, the *Proteſtant Succeſſion*, the *Peace of Europe*, *Religion*, *Toleration*, *Trade*, and *publick Credit*, are all ſeated and center'd in *his Perſon*; all ſupported, and ſupportable alone, by the Continuance and Increaſe of *his Power*. Unhappy Nation! where all theſe Bleſſings depend upon the ſingle Thread of *one Man's* Life, ſo near being ſpun out. —— If not cut off! ——— Should you ask the Reaſon of this wonderful Connection, between a *ſingle Man* and *all theſe Things*; ſhould you enquire why the Nation is reduced to an intire Dependence upon *one Subject*, and what Proofs of Ability, or Virtue, *that Subject* hath given to deſerve ſuch a prodigious Degree of Truſt, ſuch a Delegation of more than *Royal Power*; it will be anſwered, that he was a *Whig*, ſo long ago as in Queen *Anne's* Reign, and hath never acted with the *Tories*, but once when he was *out of Place*.

If this ſhould not convince you, if you ſhould examine his *Principles* by his *Conduct*, and conclude, on good Proofs, that this boaſted *Whiggiſm* is nothing more than a vain and fallacious Name, to varniſh over the Acts of *arbitrary Power*, you will be called *Jacobites*, by all the *foul-mouth'd Tools of miniſterial Defamation*; whilſt many of *thoſe*, to whom that

that Appellation notoriouſly belongs, are graced with the Favour of the *M——r*, and are the moſt zealous *Agents for his Intereſts*. Perhaps, too, *Frowns* may be play'd upon you, and you may be mark'd out for all thoſe *Mortifications*, which the *beſt Subjects* have been forced to undergo for the Sake of the *worſt*. But let not this diſcourage you. Such Deluſions cannot, muſt not long prevail, even where they have taken the deepeſt Root. *Diſgrace* and *Favour* will recover their proper Chanels. A ſhort Time muſt turn the *former* upon thoſe, who ſo indecently triumph in and abuſe the *latter*. And then what will be the Circumſtances of thoſe amongſt you, who have mingled yourſelves with the Dregs of this Iniquity, and deck'd yourſelves vainly in the worn out Robes, the ſoil'd and dirty Purple of a *deſpiſed* and *deteſted Faction againſt their Country*? Surely nothing can be more wrong, in Point of *Intereſt*, (if *Intereſt* ought at all to be conſidered where *Duty* is concerned) than for a *young Gentleman*, in the Opening of his Life, to forfeit all Claim to the Reward of Merit to his Country, in better, and probably not diſtant Times, for the Sake of a little preſent temporary Gain, obtained and preſerved on the moſt ſervile Terms. Such a Conduct would reſemble that of ſome *young Men*, who are in ſo much Haſte to be ſettled, as they call it, that they marry a *common Whore*, rather than wait for a proper Eſtabliſhment.

If then the Reaſons, which might induce you to forſake the Intereſts of your *Country*, are ſo weak and unconvincing, how much may be urged, on the *other Side*, to encourage you to act agreeably to your own unbiaſs'd Sentiments? *Young Minds* are generally moved by *great Examples*, and the *greateſt* are not wanting, on this Occaſion, to animate and inſtruct you. Look round the Nation, for the Men

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of the *higheſt Dignity*, the *moſt acknowledged Wiſdom*, and *try'd Integrity*; you ſhall find them engaged in the ſame Cauſe, to which you are now invited to accede, and ready to aſſiſt you with their Lights, their Credit, and their Friendſhip. By the Advantage of this Participation, you yourſelves will ſoon become conſiderable too, far more conſiderable than the higheſt Minions of *him* you oppoſe. Thoſe amongſt you, who are born to great Eſtates, are, by the Independency of your Condition, ſuperior to any that hold the proudeſt Fortunes, at the Pleaſure, and by the precarious Favour of a *Court*. And ſhould there be any in leſs affluent Circumſtances, what immortal Honour will they gain, if, by Oeconomy, and a generous Contempt of ſuperfluous Pleaſures, they can withſtand the Force of that Temptation? What will they loſe by ſo doing? Will they be received with leſs Eſteem and Regard in the beſt Companies, becauſe they are not brought there in an Equipage purchaſed at the Expence of *their own Virtue*, and the *Civil Liſt*? Or will they not be diſtinguiſhed, and recommended by *that Virtue*, more than they could by their Expence? Is the *Spirit of a Man of Quality* a worſe Mark of Birth and Breeding, than *ſuperfluous Expence* and *tawdry Pomp*; in which too, at beſt, you will be eclipſed by twenty *Sharpers* about Town, who are as juſtly proud of their lucky Hits at *White's*, as you can be of yours at St. *James's*, and who ſtand equal with you in real Merit, as well as in the Opinion of Mankind? What then is this mighty Sacrifice that your Country requires from you? It is only to give up ſome trifling Vanities, which fall to the Share of every *Coxcomb*; to ſeparate yourſelves from the Herd of *thoſe*, who are even the Contempt of the *Maſters* they ſerve; and to place your Pride in the ſolid Superiority of a Mind above Dependence,

and a Reputation without Attaint. Different, very different is the Sacrifice demanded from you by the *Man* that would corrupt you. Honour, Conſcience, and the Eſteem of honeſt Men, preſent Peace, and future Expectations, all muſt be given up to fleeting Favour, and perhaps to a bare Promiſe of Preferment. Judge therefore which is likely to coſt you moſt, and if, when the Account is rightly balanced, you find *Virtue* more eligible than *Vice*, you will leave all thoſe without Excuſe, who, in higher Fortunes, ſhall make a meaner Choice, and part with real Advantages to ſupport imaginary Wants.

If I may be allow'd to add a lighter Argument, to the many ſerious and ſolid ones which I have already urged, give me Leave to tell you, that upon this Choice depends the Opinion Mankind will entertain of your *Parts*, as well as of your *Probity*. Would you make any Figure in the *gay*, the *polite*, and *witty Part of the World*, you muſt not unite yourſelves to *thoſe*, who have ſo long been the Objects of their *Mirth*, and whoſe *Ridicule*, juſtly acquired and indelibly fixed, ſheds its ridiculous Influence over all their *Dependents*.

There is one Caution more to be obſerved, without which all the reſt will be ineffectual, and you will faint in the Midſt of your Career. If it ſhould happen, that your Ardour, in purſuing this glorious Cauſe, does not meet with immediate Succeſs; if Difficulties and Obſtructions ſhould ariſe; do not therefore conclude that all is loſt, and ſit down with an Opinion that it is uſeleſs to contend any farther. Such a deſponding Turn of Mind cannot poſſibly do you any Good; but it may render thoſe Diſtempers paſt Recovery, which it is yet in your Power to cure. Remember the wiſe Maxim of ancient

ent *Rome, Nolite deſperare de republica.* No, *Gentlemen,* all is not loſt, till you loſe yourſelves, and enervate your Strength by a forlorn and puſillanimous Deſpair. Do but hope, do but ſtruggle, and you will conquer. When, in the Conſternation and Affright, that ſeized the *Romans* after the great Defeat at *Cannæ*, the Senators were ſo diſcouraged as to deliberate whether they ſhould not leave the City, and retire immediately to ſome Place of Safety, *Scipio*, then a Youth, being inform'd of their Conſultation, came into their Aſſembly, with his Sword drawn, and obliged them by Force to take an Oath *not to abandon the Commonwealth.* This Action of Vigour had a ſudden and ſtupendous Effect; the *Roman* Intrepidity revived; and the Enemy ceaſed to be formidable, when he ceaſed to be fear'd. In like Manner, it becomes you, *Gentlemen*, to undertake the Defence of the Commonwealth, in this nice and dangerous Conjuncture. If you ſee it abandoned by *older* or *greater Men*, the Example of your Courage will revive their fainting Spirits, and ſhame them into a more generous Reſolution. You are certainly to look upon yourſelves as the laſt Reſource of this Conſtitution. Amongſt thoſe, who have been longer verſed in Buſineſs, many are harden'd in *Guilt* by familiar Practice; many infatuated by an habitual Courſe of *Blunders*; and too many ſunk deep in a *ſupine, unreſiſting Indolence.* When Hiſtory ſhall ſpeak of the preſent Age, in what Colours will it paint the *low Depravity* to which we are fallen? How *corrupt*, how *effeminate*, how prone to *Slavery* will it repreſent us? And how juſtly ſhall we ſuffer the Reproach of all Poſterity? But, in this black and inglorious Scene, what a noble Contraſt, what a ſhining Figure will you make, if the ſame Hiſtory ſhall relate, that *this Corruption* was

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check'd, this *Slavery* and *Ruin* prevented, by the Virtue of an *hundred young Men*, who ſtood in the Gap, and ſaved their Country?

Having addreſs'd you thus far in general, it may be expected that I ſhould deſcend into ſome Particulars relating to the *Parlimentary Function*, as well as the preſent State of Affairs both at Home and Abroad.

The firſt Step to be taken, at the Opening of a *new Parliament*, is the Choice of a proper Perſon to fill the *Chair*, and preſide over that illuſtrious Aſſembly; but as there will probably be no Contention upon this Account, I ſhall not trouble you with any Conſiderations upon it.

The Practice of ſummoning the Members to the *Cock-Pit*, by a miniſterial Writ, and haranguing them there, before his Majeſty opens the Seſſion with a Speech from the Throne, is but of modern Date, and may be juſtly rank'd amongſt thoſe Improvements which have been lately made on our *Conſtitution*. I don't know exactly how long this Cuſtom may have prevailed, nor is it of much Importance to the Publick; but I may venture to affirm, that it hath been carried farther, within a very few Years, than it ever was before; having not only been punctually obſerved at the Beginning of every Seſſion, but even proſtituted to the Service of *particular Jobs*; to ſtop Enquiries into *Frauds* of the moſt pernicious Nature; to ſcreen *Delinquints* of the worſt Kind; and infringe that *Liberty of voting*, which is always peculiarly intended by a Ballot.

There is ſomething very ridiculous, as well as unparlimentary, in theſe *miniſterial Conventions*. Their firſt Aſſembly is commonly held at the *Miniſter's* own Houſe, three or four Days before the Meeting

Meeting of *Parliament*, and conſiſts only of a *few truſty Creatures*, who are called together, in order to peruſe the *King's Speech*, and conſider of proper Perſons to move for and ſecond the *Addreſs*. *Theſe Gentlemen*, who are generally propoſed by the *Miniſter* himſelf, after a ſelf-denying Speech, modeſtly declining ſo great an Honour, and deſiring it may be put into abler Hands, are, at laſt, overcome and prevailed upon to undertake it. At the ſame Time, theſe *choice Friends* are let into the State of Affairs, as far as is neceſſary, and inſtructed what to ſay, in caſe of a Debate, upon ſeveral particular Points.———But to reſume the Buſineſs of the *Addreſs*, which, perhaps, is likewiſe drawn up and ſettled long before they met, as well as the *Speech*; for it hath been the Practice of ſome *late Miniſters*, not only to put whatever they think fit into their *Maſter's* Mouth, (which is commonly a Panegyrick on themſelves, or a Juſtification of their Meaſures) but likewiſe to do the ſame kind Office for the *Parliament*, and make them eccho back the Subſtance of it, by Way of *Addreſs*. When theſe Points are ſettled in the *miniſterial Cabinet*, for ſo I may call it, a general Aſſembly of all the *well-affected* is ſummoned to meet, a Day or two afterwards, at the *Cock-Pit*, where the ſame Farce is acted over again in a more circumſtantial and ſolemn Manner. The *Miniſter* produces a Copy of the *Speech*, which being read and received with great Applauſe, it is reſolved, *nemine contradicente*, to promote a loyal and dutiful Addreſs to his Majeſty upon it, not only to return him Thanks for ſo *gracious a Speech*, but to applaud the *Wiſdom of all his Meaſures*, and to aſſure him of their chearful Concurrence to any *Supplies* that may be judged neceſſary in the preſent Exigency; in this Manner deviating from the antient

tient Practice of Parliament, which conſiſted only in returning his Majeſty Thanks for his Speech, in general; whereas this is a previous Engagement to ſatisfy all the Demands of a *Court*; and though it may be underſtood, at Home, to be only a Compliment of Courſe, it certainly carries a different Aſpect Abroad, and looks as if the *Parliament* had, in a Lump, approved of all the Meaſures of the Adminiſtration. Then the *Perſons*, agreed upon before to move and ſecond *this Addreſs*, are propoſed by *another worthy Gentleman*, who is likewiſe let into the Secret, and unanimouſly approved. Here again they modeſtly decline it, as if there had been no previous *Meeting*, and again, with great Importunity, are prevailed upon to accept of it.——— What makes this Scene ſtill more diverting, is, that when the *Commons* return to their *own Houſe* from the *Houſe of Lords*, after his Majeſty hath made his Speech, the *Speaker* always tells them, in a formal Manner, *that he hath, with great Difficulty, obtain'd a Copy of it*; when above Half the Members, perhaps, had ſeen, or heard it read, a Day or two before. — That there have been ſuch Practices, in former Times, cannot be deny'd; but as they are certainly *unparliamentary*, and *anticonſtitutional*, they ought to be prevented for the future; at leaſt, it behoves every Gentleman, who hath the Honour to be ſent up with a Commiſſion from the *People*, to beware of the Artifices made Uſe of in theſe *novel Aſſemblies*, and to keep himſelf unengaged till the whole Merit of every Point, that is to come before him, is fully opened and explained by a free Debate on both Sides.

The next Point to be conſider'd, in Order as well as Importance, is the *Committee of Privileges and Elections*; which is a Sort of a *Court of Judicature* for the Deciſion of *Parliamentary Diſputes*; and therefore all

all Proceedings in it ought to be conducted with the utmoſt Regard to Juſtice and Honour. Yet I am very ſorry to obſerve, that, in ſome former Parliaments, *theſe Committees* have been moſt ſcandalouſly abuſed, and made the ſervile Inſtruments of a *prevailing Faction* in the Houſe, or an *inſolent domineering Miniſter*. The Misfortune is, that Gentlemen are apt to think themſelves at Liberty to vote, upon *theſe Occaſions*, juſt as their Intereſts, or Inclinations, or Friendſhips, or Alliances, or other private Conſiderations, may direct them, without any Regard to the Merits of the Cauſe. Nay, it is become a common Practice, to ſollicite *theſe Points* publickly, and to beg the Votes and Intereſt of particular Members for ſuch or ſuch an Election, if they are not pre-engaged. To this we muſt add, that the Examinations, in *ſuch Caſes*, not being upon *Oath*, there is commonly too much lying on both Sides, which gives the bad Part of the Houſe a Pretence for favouring which Side they pleaſe, and lays even the moſt impartial Judges under ſome Difficulty to determine where the Right lies. But whatever ſome Gentlemen may think, or pretend to think, an equitable Determination of *theſe Diſputes* is ſo eſſential to the *Freedom* and *Independency of Parliament*, that, as no private Influence whatſoever ought to biaſs your Judgments, ſo no Attention ſhould be wanting to inform them. It is impoſſible to lay down any particular Rules for making a right Judgment upon *theſe Occaſions*; but I believe it will be too often found true, that when *Perſons in Office* become *Petitioners*, they have no other Right to ſit in Parliament, than what they expect from the *Power* of a *Miniſter*, and the *Partiality* of the *Houſe*. Nay, many have been known to ſtand Candidates with no other View: For when a *Miniſter* finds the Country

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run ſo ſtrongly againſt him, that, with all his *Power* and *Corruption*, he can get only a very *inconſiderable Majority*, nothing is more common than to ſend his Creatures about to different Boroughs, with Orders to oppoſe Country Gentlemen at all Adventures; no Matter for the *natural Intereſt of the Place*, or the *apparent Inclinations of the People*; no, nor even for the *Poll*, *Declaration*, and *Return*. Their *ſtanding Candidates* alone gives them a Pretence of *Petitioning*, and their *Patron* an Opportunity of *weeding* the *Houſe*, as it is call'd, of obnoxious Members. But this, *Gentlemen*, is a Practice of the moſt dangerous Conſequence, which may come to affect you all, and ought to be effectually diſcountenanced before it is too late: For what avails the boaſted Right of *Engliſhmen* to chuſe their own *Repreſentatives*, if their Election is to be ſet aſide in this Manner? All Members, brought in by ſuch Means, are certainly the *Repreſentatives of the* MINISTER, not of the PEOPLE.— Alas! without any ſuch Proceedings, every *Miniſtry* hath too much Influence in the Choice of a *Parliament*: Nor have they any great Reaſon to triumph in their Succeſs, as a Mark of *Wiſdom* or *Dexterity*, when we look either *Northward*, or *Weſtward*, and ſee *particular Agents*, or *Undertakers*, ſent down to negotiate for whole Counties, in *one Place*, and for all the Members of *both Houſes* of the Legiſlature, in the *other*. Beſides this, there are Numbers of Boroughs, which are diſtinguiſhed by *ſeveral Offices*, and are thought to be ſo much the Properties of them, that they are called *Treaſury-Boroughs*, *Admiralty-Boroughs*, *Ordinance-Boroughs*, *Victualling-Boroughs*, &c. Nay, every *Governor of a Town* that ſends Members to Parliament, thinks he hath a Right to be one, and hath ſuch a Power of diſtreſſing

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and haraſſing them, that they are commonly obliged to gratify him in his Expectations.

Attendance is ſo neceſſary a Duty in *Members* of *Parliament*, that it may ſeem almoſt impertinent to put you in Mind of it; and yet it hath been ſo commonly neglected in former Parliaments, that the warmeſt Exhortations on this Head deſerve your Excuſe. If *Gentlemen* would but ſeriouſly reflect on the Nature of the Truſt which is repoſed in them, and which they have undertaken to execute, nay perhaps ſollicited it with great Importunity, and at laſt obtain'd it, in Excluſion of others who would have been proud to execute it: If they would be pleaſed to conſider that the People have choſen them their *Attornies*, to tranſact Matters of the higheſt Importance between *them* and the *Crown*, in Conjunction with the *Peers of the Realm*; and that the Liberties and Properties of a whole Nation depend on a faithful Execution of this Truſt: If *Gentlemen*, I ſay, would give themſelves Time to make ſuch Reflections as theſe, they muſt think themſelves bound, by all the Ties of Conſcience, Honour and Gratitude, to perform their Engagements, by a ſtrict and conſtant Attendance on the Buſineſs of the Publick: For what Excuſe can any *Gentleman* make to thoſe whom he repreſents, if a Point of the utmoſt Conſequence to the Nation ſhould happen to be loſt by a *ſingle Voice*, whilſt he was in Purſuit of a Fox in the Country, or perhaps loitering away his Time in Town? Such Things have frequently happened in Parliament; and it is incumbent upon every *Gentleman*, who wiſhes well to his Country, or even pretends to any Regard for it, to take Care that they do not happen again. It is always the Duty of *Parliament-Men* to give their Attendance in the *Houſe*, becauſe they don't know what Deſigns may be ſecretly in Agitation, or when

they may break out: But at ſuch a critical Time as this, confeſs'd to be ſo on both Sides, the *Abſence* of any *Gentleman*, whoſe Health will permit him to do his Duty, would be *abſolutely inexcuſeable.* It hath been juſtly compared to the skulking of a *Soldier* on the *Day of Battle*, and will appear the more ſcandalous, when we conſider, that *ill-deſigning* Men will be always ſure to attend, in Hopes of enriching themſelves on the Spoils of the Publick.

There is no Occaſion to make Uſe of any farther Arguments to enforce the Obligation of this Duty on the *Gentlemen* who compoſe the *preſent Parliament:* For I preſume, that even Curioſity itſelf will excite them to give their Attendance at the Opening of a *new Parliament*; in which the great Affairs of *Peace* and *War*, as well as ſome *other Matters*, equally important, will, in all Probability, come before them. But let no *Gentleman* think that he hath done his Duty to his Country, by being, perhaps, pretty conſtant in his *Attendance* at the Beginning of a Seſſion, or even till all the great Points, as he imagines, are over. No, the Nature of his Duty requires a *conſtant Attendance*, not only every Seſſion, but during the whole Seſſion; ſince his Abſence may prove as detrimental to his Country, at the latter End, as at the Beginning. Thoſe are the Times to which *Miniſters* commonly reſerve all *unpopular Points*, in Hopes of a thin Houſe: And the Succeſs of this Policy, in too many Inſtances, ought to determine you not to give them the ſame Opportunities for the future. I ſhall only put you in Mind, that the *Exciſe-Bill* was thrown out by the *ſtrict Attendance* of thoſe *worthy Members* who oppoſed it; and that the late *Vote of Credit* was facilitated, at leaſt, by *Non-Attendance.*

The preſent State of Affairs, both at Home and Abroad, is ſo fully explained in *two Pamphlets* late-

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ly publiſhed, which are now in almoſt every Body's Hands, that I ſhall have but very little to add upon thoſe Heads.

In * *one of theſe Pieces*, you will find a minute and exact Deduction of our *foreign Negotiations*, from the Year 1724. to the breaking out of the War between *France* and the *Emperor*; with the different Sentiments of *both Parties*, upon the Progreſs of them, from Time to Time, and the *Events* with which they have been attended. ——— From hence, *Gentlemen*, you will immediately diſcern to *whom* the preſent Diſtractions of *Europe* are owing; and whether thoſe who abetted or oppoſed theſe Tranſactions, in the *laſt Parliament*, were the trueſt Friends to the Intereſt and Honour of theſe Kingdoms. From hence you will likewiſe be able to form a Judgment of any *future Treaties*, or *Negotiations*, which may happen to be laid before you, and how far it will be your Duty to approve or diſapprove them; that is, whether they have a natural Tendency to extricate us out of that Maze of Engagements, in which we are already involved, or to plunge us into freſh Difficulties, and render our Caſe abſolutely irretrievable.

What may be the preſent and immediate Situation of our Affairs *abroad*, I ſhall not pretend to determine; nor is it poſſible for any Man to form a reaſonable Conjecture upon it, from thoſe Lights which have been hitherto afforded us. We ſee, indeed, the Balance of *Europe* quite overturn'd, and the Labour of Half a Century, as well as that infinite Expence which hath attended it, almoſt thrown away. It is extreamly difficult for thoſe, who view only the Outſide of Things, and are not let into the Seeret of Affairs, to judge what is proper and expe-

* *Politicks on both Sides*, &c.

expedient for us to do in ſuch a Conjuncture; but an *honeſt Parliament*, which hath a Power to call for, and inſiſt upon any Lights, will ſoon be able to diſcover the right Path, if any right Path is ſtill left us, in ſuch a bewilder'd Situation of Affairs, and will not do any Thing without the fulleſt Information. I wiſh it may not appear, upon this Enquiry, that we have been officiouſly dipping our Hands in many Things which did not belong to us, and thereby involving ourſelves in a Multitude of needleſs Expences. —— How different from this is the Conduct of the *States General*, who have not only avoided all theſe Difficulties and Expences for the Time paſt, but have taken their Meaſures ſo prudently, as to avoid them for the enſuing Year?

In the * *other Piece*, which I mentioned, the Conduct of our *domeſtick Affairs* is laid open, in the ſame plain Manner, by a particular Enquiry into the Caſe of our *national Debts*, the *ſinking Fund*, and all *extraordinary Grants of Money*, from the Year 1721. to *Chriſtmas* 1733. —— Here, *Gentlemen*, you may ſee to what a deplorable State our Affairs are reduced at *Home*, that *new Debts* have been heaped upon us, as faſt as any Part of the *old ones* was paid off; that the Progreſs of the *ſinking Fund*, in that good Work, hath been frequently interrupted, and at length intirely ſtopt; that ſuch *unprecedented Grants of Money* have been made, and all the *Revenues* ſo far anticipated in Times of *Peace*, that it ſeems almoſt impracticable to raiſe Supplies, for ſupporting the moſt juſt and neceſſary War, without ſuch *new* and *grievous Impoſitions*, as neither we nor our Children ſhall be able to bear.

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* *An Enquiry into the Conduct of our domeſtick Affairs*, &c.

For this Reaſon, you will think it highly incumbent upon you, as faithful Guardians of the People, not to authorize any *Meaſures*, nor to grant any *extraordinary Sums of Money*, nor to impoſe any *new Taxes* upon them, without the ſtricteſt Examination into the Reaſons alledged for them, and the fulleſt Conviction that they are abſolutely neceſſary for the Safety or Proſperity of the Kingdom. You will not, like ſome *former Parliaments*, carry your Complaiſance to the *Crown* ſo far, as to extinguiſh all Regard for the Intereſts of *thoſe* whom you repreſent; nor ſuffer yourſelves to be catched by that ſtale Artifice, of making an implicit Concurrence with all the Propoſals of a *Miniſter*, the only Criterion of Loyalty to your *Prince*, and Zeal for his *Government*. No, *Gentlemen*, you have already ſeen too much of *theſe Deluſions*, and the unhappy Conſequences of them; for as they have undeniably impoveriſhed the Nation, ſo I wiſh I could not ſay, that they have tended, at leaſt, to alienate the Affections of the People from that *auguſt Houſe*, for whoſe Intereſt the *Deluders* pretend ſo great a Concern. Nothing therefore can demonſtrate your Regard for the Safety of the preſent *Eſtabliſhment*, ſo effectually, in our preſent Circumſtances, as the *moſt rigorous Frugality*, and the Redreſs of all *thoſe Grievances* which have made the People in general ſo uneaſy, not to ſay clamorous. Beſides, none of you can now want to be informed, that the Multiplication of *Taxes*, and the vaſt Number of *additional Officers*, for the Collection and Management of them, have increaſed the *Power of the Crown* to ſuch a Degree, that they are become formidable to our *Liberties*, as well as a conſtant Drain for our *Properties*, and might ſoon be made to abſorb both, under any other Reign than the preſent. Every Circumſtance, there-

therefore, concurs to diſſwade you from increaſing *theſe Taxes* and *Officers*, without the utmoſt Neceſſity; and it muſt be ſome extream Emergency, indeed, which can conſtitute ſuch a Neceſſity in our preſent Situation. You will rather endeavour to give the People, ſome Eaſe from thoſe heavy Burdens, under which they have groaned ſo long, by putting a Stop to all *unneceſſary Expences*, and eſtabliſhing a more thrifty Oeconomy for the future. It hath always been the Practice of wiſe Nations, in Times of Danger, or Neceſſity, to ſuppreſs all *uſeleſs Offices of State*, and to retrench the Salaries of *others*, as well as to ſtrike off all *needleſs*, *unmerited* and *exorbitant Penſions*, in order to make a Saving, for the Support of the Government, without oppreſſing the People. As the State of our Affairs calls very loudly for *ſuch a Reduction*, it deſerves your impartial Conſideration, whether the *preſent Forms of our Adminiſtration* would not admit of it in ſome Degree. Why may not one Half of the Salaries of *great Employments*, *Sinecures*, and *Penſions*, (excepting thoſe of real Charity) be cut off, and given in Eaſe of a *diſtreſſed People*, who have long born the Burden of the Day, whilſt *theſe Officers* and *Penſioners* have been rioting in all the Exceſſes of Luxury, and many of them, in a ſcandalous Manner, repaying themſelves that ſmall Proportion which is alloted to them in the publick Expences? But, whether you ſhall find it practicable to make any *ſuch Retrenchments*, or not, we may aſſure ourſelves, that you will not encourage or connive at any Addition to ſuch *unneceſſary Expences*, in our preſent Circumſtances, nor ſuffer us to grow more extravagant, at a Time when we have the moſt Occaſion for Frugality. This would be like the Conduct of ſome *private Spendthrifts*, who increaſe their *Expences* as faſt

as

as they mortgage their *Eſtates*, and let their *Servants* grow rich, in Proportion as *they* grow poor. ——— You will, at leaſt, think it your Duty to inſiſt upon a *ſelect Committee*, with full Powers to enquire into the Diſpoſition of thoſe *immenſe Sums* which have been raiſed upon the People within theſe *thirteen* or *fourteen Years* paſt. Such an Enquiry, properly conducted, would fully anſwer the Trouble it would give you, and clear up ſome Points which might be of infinite Service to the Publick; for thoſe mean Arts, of various Kinds, which a *certain Gentleman* hath employ'd to obſtruct all Enquiries into his Conduct, amidſt the loudeſt repeated Defiances to examine it, are tacit Confeſſions that there is ſomething at the Bottom, which he dreads to have diſcovered, and ought to excite all your Induſtry and Application to find it out.

But, above all Things, *Gentlemen*, we flatter ourſelves, that you will never give your Conſent to thoſe *unlimited Grants of Money and Power*, which have been lately introduced amongſt us, and ſo juſtly alarm'd all the true Friends of our *Conſtitution*. Hiſtory ſhews us, that to *ſuch Conceſſions* hath been owing the Loſs of *Liberty*, in many Countries; and I believe no Inſtance can be produced of any *free People*, who were long able to preſerve their *Conſtitution* in Vigour, after *ſuch Conceſſions* became frequent and familiar to them. The Caſe of the *Spaniſh Cortes* is ſo well known, and hath been ſo fully explain'd of late, that it would be impertinent to detain you long upon it in this Place. Give me Leave therefore only to obſerve, that although the Confidence repoſed in *Henry* the II. by the *Cortes* of *Caſtile*, had not an immediate Effect in deſtroying the Freedom of *that Government*, yet the Credit and Authority of the *Cortes* began immediately

ately to decline, and continued declining, till the Liberties of *Caſtile* were intirely extinguiſhed. The Poiſon was ſure, though it was but ſlow; and, having work'd itſelf into the Bowels of the *Conſtitution*, waſted it away by Degrees, and render'd it unable, when the Attack was made, to reſiſt it with any Effect.

Such a Vote of Credit, as I am now ſpeaking of, is at beſt a *temporary Suſpenſion of our Conſtitution*, and hath a natural Tendency to aboliſh it for ever. It is not only putting the Liberties and Properties of the People to the laſt Hazard, but voting yourſelves uſeleſs, in the moſt effectual Manner; for what Influence will an *Houſe of Commons* have, when they have not only parted with the *Purſe of the People*, but diveſted themſelves of the *Power to call* Miniſters *to Account, and examine their Conduct*, as they effectually do, by repoſing ſuch a Confidence in the *Crown* to act at Diſcretion. This is laying violent Hands upon themſelves, and may be called *political Self-Murder*.

What therefore can be a greater Indignity to your Characters, as wiſe and honeſt Men, than to ſuppoſe that you will truſt any Court with a *Power* which hath proved fatal to *Liberty* in other Countries, and muſt be allowed extremely dangerous to it in all? No, *Gentlemen*, give us Leave to wiſh, as we have Reaſon to hope, that you will rather come to a Reſolution, to eraze out of your Journals all *thoſe Precedents*, which have been already made of *ſuch Grants*, inſtead of adding any *new ones* to them, and giving *future Kings*, or *Miniſters*, a Pretence for drawing them into common Uſage.

You will be told, no Doubt, as ſome of your *Predeceſſors* have been, that no ill Uſe hath been hitherto made of *theſe Powers*, and that we may never be afraid

afraid of truſting them again to ſo gracious and benevolent a Prince as his *preſent Majeſty*.

I don't know what the Gentlemen, who have already preached up ſuch Doctrines, may intend by ſaying, that *no ill Uſe hath been hitherto made of theſe Powers*. If they mean only, that the Form of our *Conſtitution* is not yet ſubverted, nor our *Liberties* abſolutely deſtroyed, I readily agree with them; and, indeed, it would be abſurd to addreſs you in this Manner, if we were actually reduced to ſuch an Extremity. But, they muſt excuſe my Apprehenſions, that theſe Powers have already been attended with ſome ill Effects, though not of ſo deſperate a Nature, and that they are big with many others. Let me ask them, for Inſtance, whether none of the Money, granted in this Manner, was ever employed in *Penſions*, and other *ſecret Services* of a more pernicious Nature, againſt the true Intereſt of theſe Kingdoms? Will they pretend to ſay, that the Power of granting *Subſidies to foreign Princes*, and of making *Contracts for foreign Troops*, as well as of *augmenting our own national Forces, both by Sea and Land, without any Limitation*, was never attended, or likely to be attended with any bad Effects? Let them examine their own Hearts, upon theſe Queſtions, and I believe they will find it ſomewhat difficult to give them an honeſt Anſwer. But, ſuppoſing *ſuch Powers* not to have been hitherto attended with any *bad Effects* whatſoever, or even to have been attended with ſome *good Effects*, yet the *ill Uſe*, that may be made of them hereafter, is ſufficient to determine you againſt them; for, whilſt they ſubſiſt, we can only be ſaid to hold our Liberties by *Courteſy*, and at the *Will of the Prince*.

As to the Virtues of his *preſent Majeſty*, which I am always ready to acknowledge, they are ſo far

from juſtifying *ſuch Grants*, that they will furniſh you with a very good Argument againſt them; ſince Experience hath taught us, that whatever Conceſſions are made, at any Time, to a *good Prince*, in Confidence that he will make Uſe of them for the Intereſt of his People, will be always claimed by *bad Princes* for other Purpoſes, and not eaſily denied, without offering them a Kind of perſonal Affront. A *good Prince* therefore, who hath the Happineſs of his People really at Heart, will not deſire to be truſted with any *Powers* which ſome of his *Succeſſors* may turn to their Deſtruction. Indeed this Argument, drawn from the *perſonal good Qualities of the Prince*, is ſo mean a Piece of Sophiſtry, and hath been ſo fully exploded, that I am aſhamed to attempt any farther Confutation of it: Beſides, *ſuch unlimited Truſts* are really of no Uſe to a *good Prince*, who is authorized by his *Prorogative* to exert ſome *extraordinary Powers*, in Caſe of any ſudden Emergency, for the Defence of the Nation, without any direct Warrant of *Parliament*. Our *Conſtitution* ſuppoſes the *Crown* to be inveſted with *ſuch a Power*, in Caſe of Neceſſity, and the Exerciſe of it muſt be juſtify'd by the Occaſion. In ſhort, a *Vote of Credit* ought to be looked upon as a previous Indemnification for all the Meaſures of a *Miniſter*, by arming him with a Sort of *dictatorial Power*, to act as he pleaſes, without any *Controul* or *Account*; for though *Miniſters* are generally liberal enough of their Promiſes, when they ask for *ſuch Grants*, you will find, upon Enquiry, that they have always deſired to be excuſed when called upon to perform them, and never yet obliged us with any *Account*; I mean, ſuch a *particular and diſtinct Account* as ought alone to give honeſt and reaſonable Men any Satisfaction. Indeed the *laſt Vote of Credit* ſo far exceeds all former

mer Truſts of the ſame Kind, and a *certain honourable Gentleman* was pleaſed to bind himſelf in ſo ſolemn a Promiſe, that whatever Uſe ſhould be made of it, he would lay an Account of it before the next Parliament, that we hope you will inſiſt with more than ordinary Earneſtneſs, on a *diſtinct Account of all Sums of Money*, which may have been expended by Virtue of *this Grant*, and of the *particular Services* for which they have been expended. I ſhall cloſe this Head, with obſerving, that if *ſuch an Account* ſhould be now refuſed you, no Credit whatſoever ought to be given to any Aſſurances or Proteſtations of that Kind, for the future.

But giving *Money*, under any Shape, was not formerly the only, nor indeed the principal Buſineſs of a *Britiſh Parliament*; for it appears very evident, from the whole Tenor of our Hiſtory, that *Aids* and *Subſidies* were commonly granted by Way of Remuneration to the *Crown*, for the Removal of *evil Miniſters*, the Puniſhment of *enormous Crimes*, the Redreſs of *publick Grievances*, and the Confirmation of *popular Liberty* by good Laws. Theſe were the Points, which always the took firſt Place in the Parliamentary Counſels of thoſe Times; and, however the Caſe may have been ſince altered, ought ſtill to prevail on the Minds of *thoſe Gentlemen* who think themſelves obliged to fulfil the Intentions of their *Conſtituents*, and prefer a generous Regard for their *Country*, to any mean Conſiderations of *private Intereſts*.

Let me therefore exhort you to take a View of the *laſt Parliament*, in this Light, and to form a Judgment of the *two Parties* who compoſed it, by the *different Ends* they purſued, and the *different Acts*, or *Proceedings*, which they either promoted or oppoſed.

Should

Should you obſerve, on *one Side*, a continued Scheme for loading the People with *Taxes* and *Armies*, in Times of *Peace*; for bridling them with *oppreſſive Laws*, and ſubjecting them to the Power of *inſolent Tax-Gatherers*; ſhould there appear amongſt them an implicit Submiſſion to all the Dictates of a *Miniſter*, and a conſtant Readineſs to juſtify, not only all his Meaſures, and ward off all Enquires into his Conduct, but even to ſcreen *Iniquities of every Kind*, and to convert *that Place*, which ought to be the Scourge and the Terror of great Offenders, into a Kind of Sanctuary and Aſylum for them; ſhould *theſe Perſons* have diſcovered a determined Reſolution to oppoſe all Laws, and all Proviſions for preventing that devouring Evil, *Corruption*, for advancing the Cauſe of *Liberty*, and guarding the weak Parts of our *Conſtitution*, againſt the Incroachments of the *Crown* in future Times; in ſhort, ſhould it be manifeſt, from their former Conduct, that they conſult only their *own Intereſt*, their *own private corrupt Intereſt*, without any Regard to the Happineſs of their Fellow-Subjects, or the great Truſt repoſed in them; ſhould this, I ſay, appear to you, upon a Review of the Proceedings of the *laſt Parliament*, you will ſcorn to follow ſo deteſtable an Example, or to adopt the Crimes and the Infamy of ſuch *Men*, by treading in their Steps, and giving a Sanction to their Meaſures. — No, *Gentlemen*, you will rather think it your Duty to concur with thoſe on the *other Side*, in oppoſing ſuch Meaſures, and calling the *Authors* of them to a ſtrict Account, as well as in promoting thoſe *good* and *wholſome Laws*, for the Eaſe and Benefit of the *People*, the Protection of *Liberty*, and the Security of our *Conſtitution*, which the *Revolution* gave us a Right to expect, and which are ſtill wanting to compleat it.

Give

Give me Leave, *Gentlemen*, to be a little more particular on this Head, and to refreſh your Memories with a few Inſtances on *both Sides*.

Do you think, that it would have been any Diſſervice to your Country, if ſo large a *ſtanding Army* had not been kept up at Home, in Times of abſolute Peace, at the Expence of ſeveral *Millions of Money*; or if *Twelve thouſand Heſſians* had not been maintained Abroad, for almoſt *five Years* together, at the Expence of above a *Million* more, ſent out of the Kingdom, if all of it did actually go; beſides other Subſidies and Penſions to *foreign Princes*; for ſome of them do not deſerve even the Name of *Subſidies*?——Do you believe, that all thoſe *various Treaties*, in which we have been lately engaged, have really been of any Advanrage to the Nation; or that our *naval Expeditions*, in Purſuance of them, (to ſay nothing of our *domeſtick Armada's*) have been attended with any other Effects, than rotting our *Ships*, deſtroying Multitudes of our *Seamen*, and driving others into foreign Service?——Are you of Opinion, that the fraudulent Management of the *Charitable Corporation*, or the Sale of the late Earl of *Darwentwater's* Eſtate, ought to have gone unexamined? or rather, are you not convinced, that ſuch flagrant Iniquities ought to have been puniſhed in a much more ſevere and exemplary Manner?—— Are you not as firmly convinced, that if the Enquiry into the *Frauds of the Cuſtoms* had not been defeated, in ſo ſhameleſs a Manner, by the very *Perſon* who firſt ſet it on Foot, a Diſcovery might have been made of Abuſes no leſs enormous and unjuſtifiable than the *others*?——*Laſtly*, Do you, in your Conſciences, believe that the late *Exciſe-Scheme* was calculated for the Intereſt, Happineſs, and Safety of a *free People*; or even that it did not contain a

whole

whole Syſtem of Oppreſſion, and ſtrike at the very Vitals of our *Conſtitution?*

On the other Hand, Do you think that a vigorous Oppoſition to *ſuch Meaſures* as I have juſt mentioned, and the moſt ſtrenuous Endeavours to bring the Authors of them to Juſtice, were either unſeaſonable or illaudable? Lay your Hands upon your Hearts, *Gentlemen*, and declare, whether you do not believe, that *this Oppoſition*, and *theſe Endeavours*, have been of Service to your Country, in ſeveral Inſtances, though they may not have proved ſo effectual as could have been wiſhed.——But beſides the *bad Things* which the *Gentlemen in the Oppoſition* either prevented or oppoſed, we muſt not paſs over thoſe *good Things* which they have actually obtained, or attempted to obtain for us. Don't you think, that the *Act to prevent* BRIBERY *and* CORRUPTION, *in the Elections of Members to ſerve in Parliament*, was a well-intended, a ſalutary, and a truly glorious Law? I am afraid, indeed, that it hath not had all the Effect propoſed by the Legiſlators; and what Law may not be evaded, when the Evaſion of it is countenanced and encouraged by *thoſe* who ought to put it in Execution? But I have the Pleaſure to obſerve, at the ſame Time, that the Deſign of *this Act* hath not been intirely defeated, notwithſtanding all the Artifices of the *Agents of Corruption*. It hath, at leaſt, put a Stop to their Dealing publickly for *Boroughs* here in Town, and render'd that iniquitous Merchandize more difficult, dangerous and expenſive. We know, indeed, by fatal Experience, that there are Men, even of plentiful Fortunes, who are not aſhamed to undertake this *dirty Office*, and to degrade themſelves into the *loweſt Suborners of Perjury*; for that is now the Caſe of every Man who *bribes* another to vote againſt his Conſcience, and

to ſwear that he does it without *Gift* or *Reward*. But beſides the *Proſtitution* and *Infamy* of ſuch an Undertaking, it is likewiſe attended with *Hazards*, which no wiſe Man, in tolerable Circumſtances, would run, upon any Account; for however theſe *Borough-Brokers* may flatter themſelves, with Hopes of Protection from *him* who employs them, they will certainly find themſelves diſappointed, whenever the *Parliament* ſhall think fit to enquire into *ſuch Practices*; which are grown ſo notorious, and have been ſo loudly complained of by all Parties, in their Turns, that I hope the Day of Enquiry is not far off.——Again, can you deny, the *late Act, for preventing the infamous Practice of* STOCKJOBBING, to be a wiſe, an honeſt, and an efficacious Law? Hath it not been already attended with ſurpriſing Succeſs, in clearing the *Alley* of thoſe Swarms of *Locuſts* which uſed to infeſt the Centre of Trade, and prey upon the Properties of an induſtrious People?—*Both theſe beneficial Acts* are owing to the Aſſiduity and Vigour of *thoſe Gentlemen* who paſſed under the Denomination of the *Country Party*, in the laſt Parliament; nor are we leſs indebted to them for their Endeavours to procure us ſeveral others of the ſame publick-ſpirited Nature.——Do you think, *Gentlemen*, that the Nation would have ſuffered any real Damage, or Inconvenience, if the *Penſion-Bill*, the *Place-Bill*, and the *Qualification-Bill*, had been paſſed into Laws? Are not *ſuch Laws* ſtill neceſſary to preſerve that *Independency of the Houſe of Commons on the Crown*, which is the Baſis of our *Conſtitution*, and without which it would ſoon degenerate into the worſt Kind of *arbitrary Government*; that is, a *Government by Will*, ſuch as *Tiberius* exerciſed, with a *proſtitute dependent Senate*, to palliate all his tyrannical Meaſures, and even to enforce the Execution

of

of them? Nay, are not *ſuch Laws* more neceſſary at this Time than in any former Age; ſince the Means of deſtroying *this Independency*, by *Places*, *Penſions*, and *Bribes*, are infinitely more extenſive than they ever were before; and even the Morality of employing *theſe Means* hath been publickly avowed and defended? When Things are brought to ſuch a Paſs, it is high Time for a *Britiſh Houſe of Commons* to exert themſelves; to vindicate their own Characters; and to ſhew the World, that they are really the *Guardians*, as well as the *Repreſentatives of the People*. Is it not abſolutely neceſſary, for Inſtance, that ſome Enquiry ſhould be made into the Manner of the late Elections in *Scotland*; and if the Charge laid in the *Proteſts of ſeveral noble Lords*, upon that Occaſion, ſhould appear to be as well founded, as it is plauſible, ought not *ſuch Practices* to be ſeverely puniſhed, as a downright Invaſion of our Conſtitution? In what Shape *this Affair* will come before you, or how you may think fit to proceed upon it, I ſhall not pretend to conjecture; but as it will probably come before Parliament, in ſome Shape or other, we may aſſure ourſelves that you will examine it to the Bottom, and do ſomething, at leaſt, to prevent, for the future, the abſolute Nomination of *Sixteen Members to ſit in the other Houſe of Parliament*, and, perhaps, *Double the Number in your own*.

Give me Leave, *Gentlemen*, to repeat and inculcate it on your Minds, that you ought not to give up ſo glorious a Cauſe, if you ſhould happen to meet with ſome Diſcouragements at your firſt ſetting out, but to purſue it with invariable Zeal, and indefatigable Application. You muſt conſider, that the Evils, of which we complain, are grown very obſtinate, and cannot be eradicated without Time and Trouble. But do not therefore deſpair, nor ſuffer your-

yourſelves to be tired out of the Attempt. It may give you ſome Conſolation, to reflect, that even *inconſiderable Minorities*, heartily united amongſt themſelves, and inflexibly reſolved to purſue the Intereſt of their Country, have frequently work'd themſelves up to *Majorities*. Nay, you cannot forget, that about *Seventy* or *Eighty Gentlemen*, in the laſt Parliament, gain'd ſo much Strength by their Steadineſs and Reſolution, as to throw out the *moſt pernicious and execrable Bill* that was ever offered to a *Britiſh* Parliament.

Upon the whole, *Gentlemen*, as this is one of the moſt critical Conjunctures that ever *England* ſaw, we rely upon your Prudence, your Impartiality, your Vigour, and your unwearied Perſeverance in the Diſcharge of that high Truſt which is committed to you, and which you have ſo many Obligations to diſcharge with the ſtricteſt Integrity. You are lately come up from different Parts of the Kingdom, where you have heard the *Voice of the People*, and can be no Strangers to the *Senſe of the People*. You know their *Wants* too; as well as the Falſhood of thoſe confident Aſſertions, *That the Nation wat never in a more flouriſhing Condition than at preſent*; and, *That all our Complaints proceed only from a factious Diſpoſition in the People, without any juſt Cauſe or Reaſon in the Circumſtances of Things*. You have ſeen in what Manner *ſome Members of the late Parliament* have been hiſs'd out of their Counties, or Boroughs, with the ſtrongeſt Marks of Reſentment, for acting contrary to the known Senſe and Intereſt of their *Conſtituents*. You have ſeen how others have been received with univerſal Applauſe, and almoſt Adoration, for conſulting and purſuing both. In ſhort, *Gentlemen*, you cannot plead Ignorance of our *Miſfortunes*, or of our *Grievances*; and therefore we have

the ſtrongeſt Reaſons to hope and expect, that, if you have any Regard for the *publick Good*, or even for your *own private Intereſt*, rightly conſidered, you will immediately take our unhappy Caſe into your Conſideration, and apply ſome effectual Remedies to it. If you do this, the Bleſſings of the preſent Age will accompany all your Endeavours, and endear your Names to the lateſt Poſterity. If you take another Courſe—but I am ſo loth to ſuppoſe that any Conſiderations will prevail upon you to act ſuch a Part, that I chuſe to ſuppreſs the Conſequences of it; and ſhall conlude in the Words of the late Mr. *Trenchard*, who not only took the Liberty of addreſſing you on a like Occaſion, (tho' far leſs momentuous than the preſent, and when we were in much better Circumſtances than at preſent) but was himſelf a Member of your illuſtrious Body.

This Gentleman, having ſhew'd that the *Dabblers in Corruption* are Loſers by it, in the Main, when they come to caſt up their Accounts, proceeds thus,

* 'But even *theſe corrupt Advantages* are no longer 'to be had upon the ſame Terms. The Bow is 'ſtretch'd ſo far, that it muſt break, if it goes far-'ther. *Corruption*, like all other Things, has its 'Bounds, and muſt at laſt deſtroy itſelf, or deſtroy 'every Thing elſe. We are already almoſt *mortgaged 'from Head to Foot*. There is ſcarce any Thing which 'can be *tax'd*, that is *not tax'd*. Our Veins have 'been opened and drained ſo long, that there is no-'thing left but our *Heart's Blood*; and yet every Day '*new Occaſions* ariſe upon us, which muſt be ſupplied 'out of *exhauſted Chanels*, or cannot be ſupplied at 'all. How think you, *Gentlemen*, this can be done? What

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* Cato's *Letters*, *Vol. III. Page* 280. *Third Edit.*

' What has been raiſed *within the Year*, has not been ' found ſufficient to defray the *Expences of the Year*; ' and will any one amongſt you, in Times of full ' Peace, conſent to *new mortgage the Kingdom* to ſup- ' ply the *current Service?* And if you could be pre- ' vail'd upon to conſent to it, how long do you be- ' lieve it can laſt, or that you can find *Creditors?* ' And what can be the Conſequence of *ſuch Credit?* ' Sure it muſt make the *Payment deſperate*; and if e- ' ver that grows to be the Caſe, what think you will ' be *the Event?* Who, do you imagine, will have the ' *Sweeping of the Stakes?* Do you believe thoſe who ' brought your Misfortunes upon you will pay the ' Reckoning at laſt, or ſave themſelves, by endea- ' vouring to compleat their Wickedneſs? There is ' no Way, *Gentlemen*, to prevent all *theſe Evils* which ' lowr over and threaten you and us, but by prevent- ' ing or removing the *Cauſes* of them; and I hope ' you will think it worthy your beſt Conſiderations, ' and moſt vigorous Endeavours to do ſo, rather than ' to ſuffer under, and be undone by them.

' By doing this great Service to your Country, you ' will not only conſult your *Reputation*, your *own In- ' tereſts*, and the Intereſts of *thoſe* whom you repre- ' ſent, but, in the moſt effectual Manner, will ſerve ' your *Prince*, by making him a glorious King over ' an happy, ſatisfy'd, dutiful and grateful People. A ' *great* and *rich People* can alone make a *great King*: ' Their *diffuſive* and *accumulative Wealth* is his *Wealth*, ' and always at his Command, when employ'd for ' his true Glory, which is ever their Happineſs and ' Security: And the Figure he does, or can make ' among *foreign States*, bears exact Proportion to the ' Affections which he has amongſt his *own People*. If ' his *People* are diſaffected, his *Neighbours* and his ' *Enemies* will deſpiſe him; and the *latter* will in-

' ſult

'ſult him, if they think his *Subjects* will not defend 'him: And therefore, ſince nothing is wanting, on 'his *Majeſty*'s Part, to make him belov'd, honour'd, 'I had almoſt ſaid ador'd by his *People*, it lies upon 'you, *Gentlemen*, to remove all *thoſe Cauſes*, which, 'at any Time hereafter, by the Fault of others, may 'ſully and blemiſh his high Character. It is your 'Duty, and your Intereſt too, to acquaint him with 'all Miſcarriages in the *inferior Adminiſtration*, which 'you have frequent Opportunities of knowing, and 'which 'tis next to impoſſible he ſhould otherwiſe 'know. *Princes* are ſeated aloft in the upper Regi-'ons, and can only view the Whole of Things, but 'muſt leave the Detail and Execution of them to 'inferior *Agents*.

I am,

GENTLEMEN,

Your affectionate Fellow-Subject,

and moſt obedient humble Servant,

A FREEHOLDER.